an outer tubular structure having a proximal end and a distal end, wherein the outer tubular structure has a translucent region at its distal end and the translucent region has a length that substantially coincides with a constrained length of a stent within the outer tubular structure;

an inner elongated structure having a proximal end and a distal end, the inner elongated structure being located within the outer tubular structure such that the distal end of the inner elongated structure substantially coincides with the distal end of the outer tubular structure;

a stent accommodating area on the distal end of the inner elongated structure; and

an external tubular structure contact area projecting from a surface of the inner elongated structure and located proximal to the stent accommodating area, the external tubular structure contact area frictionally sliding against an interior surface of the outer tubular structure.

12. (Amended) The system of claim 5, further comprising a stent located in the stent accommodating area and within the outer tubular structure when the stent is constrained.

13. (Twice Amended) The system of claim 5, further comprising:

a gap between an external surface of the external tubular structure and the interior surface of the outer tubular structure.

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B3

15. (Amended) The structure of claim 19, further comprising:

a stent positioned in the stent accommodating area.

16. (Amended) The structure of claim 19, wherein the engagement areas on the elongated structure are constructed of Pellethane.

B4

25. (Amended) The structure of claim 29, further comprising:

a stent positioned in the stent accommodating means.

26. (Amended) The structure of claim 29, wherein the engagement means on the elongated structure is constructed of Pellethane.

B5

35. (Amended) The method of claim 39, further comprising:

before completely deploying the stent into the anatomical structure, moving the inner elongated structure proximally while maintaining the position of the outer tubular structure, thus retracting the at least part of the stent from the anatomical structure back into the stent accommodating area; and

re-positioning the stent delivery system to a new position with respect to the anatomical structure.

36. (Amended) The method of claim 39, wherein the external tubular structure contact areas on the inner elongated structure are constructed of Pellethane.

B6

45. (Amended) A method of deploying a stent with respect to an anatomical structure, the method comprising:

providing a stent delivery system, the system comprising:

an outer tubular structure having a proximal end and a distal end, wherein the outer tubular structure has a translucent region at its distal end and the translucent region has a length that substantially coincides

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with a constrained length of a stent within the outer tubular structure;

an inner elongated structure having a proximal end and a distal end, the inner elongated structure being located within the outer tubular structure such that the distal end of the inner elongated structure substantially coincides with the distal end of the outer tubular structure;

a stent accommodating area on the distal end of the inner elongated structure accommodating a stent; and

an external tubular structure contact area projecting from a surface of the inner elongated structure and located proximal to the stent accommodating area, the external tubular structure contact area able to frictionally slide against an interior surface of the outer tubular structure;

inserting the stent delivery system through an insertion point in a body until the distal ends of the external tubular structure and the inner elongated structure are in a position within the anatomical structure;

moving the outer tubular structure proximally while maintaining the position of the inner elongated structure, thus exposing the stent accommodating area and releasing at least part of the stent into the anatomical structure;

continuing the proximal movement of the outer tubular structure with respect to the inner elongated structure until the stent is completely deployed into the anatomical structure; and

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withdrawing the stent delivery system from the insertion point in the body.

46. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 39, wherein the stent delivery system further comprises:

a gap between an external surface of the external tubular structure and the interior surface of the outer tubular structure.

47. (New) The system of claim 11, further comprising:

a gap between an external surface of the inner elongated structure and the interior surface of the outer tubular structure.

48. (New) The system of claim 11, further comprising:

at least one marker band on the inner elongated structure proximate the stent accommodating area.

49. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein the stent delivery system further comprises:

a gap between an external surface of the inner elongated structure and the interior surface of the outer tubular structure.

50. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein the stent delivery system further comprises:

at least one marker band on the inner elongated structure proximate the stent accommodating area.

51. (New) The method of claim 45, further comprising:

before completely deploying the stent into the anatomical structure, moving the inner elongated structure proximally while maintaining the position of the outer tubular

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structure, thus retracting the at least part of the stent from the anatomical structure back into the stent accommodating area; and

re-positioning the stent delivery system to a new position with respect to the anatomical structure.

52. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein the external tubular structure contact area on the inner elongated structure is constructed of Pellethane.--

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 1, 3, 4, 10, 14, 17, 18, 24, 27, 28, 34, 37, 38, and 44, without prejudice or disclaimer; amend claims 2, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 25, 26, 35, 36, 45, and 46; and add new claims 47-52.

In the Office Action dated February 13, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1-12, and 14-45 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,306,294 to Winston et al. in combination with one or more of U.S. Patent 5,709,703 to Lukic et al., U.S. Patent 5,830,179 to Mikus et al., and U.S. Patent 5,100,381 to Burns. The Examiner also rejected claims 13 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,810,837 to Hofmann et al. As the rejections apply to the pending claims, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

The Section 103 Rejections

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Section 103(a) rejections of the pending claims. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be satisfied. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to

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